

For Immediate Release: June 4, 2009

Contact:

Jon Houston, Maloney, (202) 225-7944
Kimberly Hunter, Webb, (202) 224-4024
Dan Scandling, Wolf, (202) 225-5136
Marcus A. Williams, Lynch, (202) 226-5845

WASHINGTON, DC – Legislators today came out in support of H.R. 626, which would provide federal employees with four weeks of paid parental leave after the birth or adoption of a child and will be debated and voted on by the U.S. House of Representatives today.

“The Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act” (H.R. 626) was introduced by Representatives Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY), Frank R. Wolf (R-VA), Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD), Danny K. Davis (D-IL), and House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Edolphus Towns (D-NY) and Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, Postal Service, and the District of Columbia Chairman Stephen F. Lynch (D-MA). Senator Jim Webb (D-VA) has introduced companion legislation in the Senate (S. 354).

“Many employers say that their policies are ‘family-friendly,’ but it’s past time for the Federal Government to ‘walk the walk’ when it comes to paid parental leave,” said Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), prime sponsor of H.R. 626. “As the nation’s largest employer, the federal government should be joining the majority of the private sector and 168 other nations by enacting workplace policies that invest in employees and their children. Some say the government can’t afford to do so in times like these; I say we can’t afford not to, as more and more families are relying on just one paycheck.”

“The legislation considered in the House this week and championed by Representative Maloney is an issue of fairness for the working family, said Senator Jim Webb (D-VA), sponsor of the Senate version of FEPLA. “I believe that we should give federal employees the same

opportunity for family-friendly benefits that are offered to military families and a growing number of workers in the private sector. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the U.S. Senate to advance a standard for workplace policy that supports our federal workers.”

“Over the last decade, many private employers have since begun offering several weeks of paid parental leave benefit,” said Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA). “Private employers have recognized that this helps create stronger families and a more balanced workforce. With the coming wave of federal retirements, we must ensure that the federal workforce supports young Americans starting families.”

“Allowing four weeks of paid parental leave for federal employees upon the arrival of a new child is a matter of basic decency,” said Chairman Stephen F. Lynch (D-MA). “Especially for new moms in the workforce who are trying to re-balance their lives after the birth of a child and for newly adopted or foster families. This is a very brief chance to catch their breath and to bond with their children. In an ideal world, I wish it were longer, but at this stage in this economy – I think this is the very best we can do. Also, from the perspective of the federal workforce, 20 days of paid leave will be helpful in retaining the best and the brightest public servants and increasing employee morale.”

Background. Federal employees currently receive no paid time off specifically to care for an infant or newly adopted child. If they have a child and want paid time off, they have to cobble together their accrued sick days and vacation time.

By failing to provide paid parental leave, the federal government lags behind both the private sector (53 percent of private-sector employers provide some form of paid parental leave), and other industrialized nations; the U.S. is the only industrialized country that does not provide support for all workers with a new child.

In the 110th Congress, FEPPLA passed the House by a convincing bipartisan margin of 278-146, including 50 Republicans.

Organizations that support the bill include: the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Federally Employed Women, Moms Rising, the National Partnership for Women and Families,

and the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU).

For additional information on “The Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act,” including a comprehensive background memo on the legislation, please visit: http://maloney.house.gov/index.php?option=com_issues&task=view_issue&issue=263&parent=21&Itemid=35.

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